

COMMUNITY CONNECTION

A NEWSLETTER FOR FRIENDS OF EVANSVILLE STATE HOSPITAL VOLUNTEERS BRIGHTEN SEASON

The hospital is blessed with so many wonderful volunteers who help brighten the holiday season for our patients. The entire month of December was filled with celebrations and special events beginning with the annual concert by the **Hadi Shrine Brass Band** on December 1st. These Shriners help kick off the season each year with our holiday favorites and are loads of fun.



University of Evansville's Music Therapy Association played non-traditional Christmas carols to go along with the Hawaiian theme this year.

The social holiday mixer this year was a tropical one with a Hawaiian themed Christmas party complete with Elvis, a.k.a. volunteer **Fred Harris**, and a few hula dancers (Assistant Superintendent **Steve Cruse** and Rehab Therapy Assistant **Robert Jenkins**), who joined in the fun. Even Santa, a.k.a. **Jim Moore**, arrived sporting a lei and Hawaiian shirt over his traditional red. The **University of Evansville's Music Therapy Association** treated the 100+ attendees to some non-traditional Christmas carols. Rehab Therapist **Mindy Miller** led the newly formed hand bell choir in three songs. The large Christmas tree was adorned with sandals, leis, sand buckets, Frisbees, and summer toys given out as door prizes to family members in attendance.

You have to witness these next two gatherings to fully understand the anticipation they bring each year. The first is a big bash hosted by the

Central Labor Council. This large group of volunteers bring along yummy sweet treats, gifts for programming, and live music to dance the night away. Everyone has a great time. The Hospital Wide Christmas Party is an afternoon of fellowship that always includes caroling, a Christmas story or two, crafts, good food, and lots of laughter and hugs. The following groups participated by hosting unit parties simultaneously: **F.O.C.U.S., USI's Social Work Club, Fairlawn United Methodist Church, Our Saviour Lutheran Church, East Side Lions, and St. Benedict Cathedral's St. Vincent DePaul Society.** **Crossroads Christian Church** and **Men of C.O.L.O.R.** also participated in the festivities.

A gift exchange was part of the merriment at the December **Friend to Friend Party**. The **American Legion Auxiliary** treated our veterans to a catered chicken luncheon. **North Woods Church** sponsored a unit party complete with Santa, gifts, and caroling. **Oak Hill Baptist Church** held a bingo party with patients filling holiday bags with gift items as they won.

A big thank you to all of our volunteers!



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EXPRESSIVE THERAPY

By Gene Schadler, L.C.W., A.C.S.W., R.P.T.-S

A patient sits in a therapy session looking down to the ground feeling so emotionally overwhelmed that he cannot say what needs to be said. The more he talks, the more upset he becomes. Another patient is having intense dreams but is too ashamed to share them. She cannot find the words to say what needs to be said. These are situations that mental health professionals encounter in our work with patients. The majority of mental health services depends on the effective use of language to change behavior. Different therapy models provide a myriad of ways to use language, play and symbolism. Expressive or play therapy can be defined as a dynamic relationship between a therapist and patient where a trained clinician uses different materials in a safe secure environment that promotes the expression of beliefs, thoughts and feelings.



Two bookcases filled with miniatures line the walls in the Expressive Therapy Room.

Why go to the trouble of expressive therapy when we have other evidenced-based treatments? This question gets to the core of why expressive therapy is important. The brain develops from the inside out and from the lower brain up to the frontal lobe. Expressive therapy uses more of our senses and the different parts of our brain. Instead of starting with thoughts and reasoning, expressive therapy starts with movement and action. By doing an activity, sand tray, movement or action, ideas and feelings come forward that come from the client themselves. Expressive therapy works with the patient where they are at and meets their developmental needs. A patient that does not reason benefits from the lower brain work of moving and playing that leads to the possibility of relaxation. For the patient who is

higher functioning, they combine the usage of movement, play, symbolism and story in their work to address core issues.

Although some people believe that play is only the work of children, we all benefit from play. People that play live longer and are happier. For those of us who work in an emotionally intense environment, play is an important way to recharge our batteries and decrease burn-out.

In 2009, Evansville State Hospital opened up an Expressive Therapy Room or the "Sand Room" as some patients refer to the space. It is in the former quiet room on the Treatment Mall. The space includes two sand trays, a variety of images or miniatures, paper, markers, play dough, and bubbles for patients to use with individual or group therapy. The miniatures represent the continuum of life in the universe, for example rocks, trees, animals, mythological images, people and deity. The symbolism ranges from love, sexuality, and aggression to spirituality.

On January 15, thirty-six staff members from Psychology, Social Services, Rehab Therapy, and Community Integration Program attended "Overview of Expressive Therapy". There will be ongoing trainings and supervision this year to provide more opportunities to learn this modality as a means to supplement the variety of services provided by Evansville State Hospital.



HELPING HANDS

SPONSORS ARE VITAL TO GIFT PROGRAM

Christmas Sponsors are the vital piece to our holiday gift program at Evansville State Hospital. In addition to the support we received from the mental health associations throughout the state of Indiana, over 150 individuals, staff, and civic groups provided Christmas gifts for our patients this year.

Do the patients receive what they ask for? You bet! Our sponsors search long and hard for specific items the patients have listed on their wish lists. And happy they are with the new clothing and entertainment items, particularly new sleepwear, shoes, winter apparel, music, CD players, and radios. Some received classic card and board games which spurred group activities on the units in the afternoon and evening hours. Thanks to all our donors who helped make our patients' wishes come true this holiday season! We couldn't do it without you!



Employees Buff Wallace-Fallen and Fr. Robert Giffin assist patients with opening gifts.



Cathy Gostley, Special Olympics Coordinator, accepts a check from Tom Coomes, Knights of Columbus Council 14192 member and ESH retiree.

SPECIAL OLYMPIC PROGRAM RECEIVES FUNDING

The hospital received a \$200.00 donation from the **Knights of Columbus Council 14192** on January 20, which will benefit the hospital's **Special Olympics** program. Their annual tootsie-roll sale helps support several community projects which included Special Olympics.

Cathy Gostley, Special Olympics coach and coordinator of the hospital's program, was on hand to receive the check and noted that "the gift will help fund entry fees to compete in tournaments and help with travel costs including meals. The program is so beneficial to our patients as it helps them develop friendships, learn sports skills, and connect with the community." Our patients are part of the Special Olympics Vanderburgh County program participating among 180+ athletes in basketball, bowling, bocce, track, and softball.

JAN/FEBRUARY

- Jan 16—MLK Celebration
- Jan 20—Presidential Inauguration
- Feb 1—Super Bowl Party 
- February 13—Valentines Party
- February 19-21—Black History Month Activities

Friend to Friend Volunteers

Needed! Contact Theresa at 812-469-6800, ext. 4970 if you can help by befriending a patient.

WELCOME VOLUNTEERS:

Bryan Barber
Sally Compton
Kayci Cunningham
Nancie Gruber
Marcey Head-Vanpell
Anita Heller
Dakota Hines
Brianna Laswell
Corey Southers
Kira Stone

Nursing Students from
Ivy Tech, Henderson, and
Owensboro Community
Colleges



THANK YOU DONORS!

Merrill Lynch Employees
St. John's Baptist Church—
Newburgh
Tri Kappa, Rockville
Elberfeld American Legion
Post 351
Central Labor Council
United Commercial
Travelers of America
Good Shepherd Parish
Star Power-Harrison HS
National Honor Society—
Central HS
Columbia General Baptist
Church
USI Social Work & Nursing
Epsilon Sigma Alpha Delta
Sigma Chapter
St. John's UCC Women's
Guild
Memorial Missionary
Baptist Church
St. Anne's Altar Society

MHA's—Greene, Gibson,
Vanderburgh, Parke, Vigo,
Dubois, and Daviess

COMMUNITY CONNECTION is published every other month for friends of Evansville State Hospital. News items are welcome and should be submitted to the Community Services Office.

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WE'RE ON THE WEB!
WWW.IN.GOV

Did You Know?

19,596 MEALS WERE SERVED IN NOVEMBER

Did you know that the kitchen is the very nerve center of most homes and our own Food Department? No Food— No Happy People! The Evansville State Hospital's Dietary Department, consisting of two consulting dietitians and 37 staff, strives to provide residents and staff with high quality food that meets everyone's nutritional needs. The River Birch Dining Room is open from 4:45 am.—7:00 p.m., seven days a week. In November 2008, 19,596 meals were served. The Dietary Dept. provides three different kinds of meal service: regular dining, the Aladdin Tray System on Geriatric Services, and Family Style Dining for Development Training Services in the main dining room. Grab-N Go sack lunches and salads are also available for employees on all shifts. A four week menu cycle for each season is prepared by the dietitians and supervisors with input from residents and employee surveys. New products are added each year from this feedback. Food for special events is handled by the department, such as for cooking classes and special functions and dinners. Patti Brunni, Food Service Director, says "I am lucky to have a lot of talented people that help with these large projects." The kitchen is surveyed twice a year by the Board of Health; reports are always favorable. Cleanliness is a top priority in the kitchen.

We bid a hearty farewell to Patti Brunni who is retiring at the end of January with 25 years of service. She has been a part of over 5 million meals served at ESH. We will miss her dearly!

WELCOME NEW EMPLOYEES

Joan Filippes, Nursing Service

Fr. Robert Giffin, Chaplain

Martha Lafferty, Nursing Service

Marguita King, Nursing Service

Denise Orrick, Nursing Service

Pam Owens, Administration

Samantha Robertson, Housekeeping

GOODBYE

Patti Brunni, Dietary Department

Heather Hurm, Nursing Service

Donna Scarbrough, Housekeeping

Sue Shelton, Unit Secretary

Mel Tillman, Administration

Kristy Trinh, Nursing Service



**In Memory Of
 Robert H. Robinson**



Patti Brunni, receives a memento from the Recognition Committee presented on her last day by Superintendent Cathe Fulcher.